



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE
10 W. JACKSON BLVD.
CHICAGO, IL 60604

NEWS RELEASE

Monday, July 2, 2001

250 Become Newest Americans in Special Citizenship Ceremony Celebrating July 4th

(Chicago) — In celebration of the 4th of July holiday, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), along with the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and The Field Museum, held a special naturalization ceremony for 250 new citizens. This event took place in the James Simpson Theater of The Field Museum. Candidates for today's ceremony included persons from 53 different countries, with Mexico having the largest representation, followed by Poland and then India.

"Our country's greatness is deeply rooted in our rich immigration tradition," said INS District Director, Brian R. Perryman. "New citizens bring unique cultural, scientific, artistic and economic talents that result in immeasurable contributions to our nation."

To be eligible for U.S. citizenship, an applicant must meet the following requirements:

- Be 18 years of age or older;
- Be a Legal Permanent Resident ("Green Card" holder) for at least 5 years, or 3 years if married to a U.S. citizen.
- Be a person of good moral character;
- Be able to speak, read, write and understand ordinary English words and phrases; and
- Be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of U.S. history and principles of government.

The INS has provided immigration benefits, including the naturalization of new citizens, to Illinois immigrants since July 1, 1897. Granting U.S. citizenship to eligible applicants remains a top priority of the INS nationwide. In Fiscal year 2001, October 1, 2000 through the present, the INS naturalized over 21,000 new citizens in the state of Illinois.

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The Oath of Allegiance for New Citizens

*I hereby declare, on oath,
that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any
foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been
a subject or citizen;*

*that I will support and defend the Constitution and the laws of the United States of
America against all enemies, foreign and domestic;
that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same;
that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law;
that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States
when required by the law;
that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required
by the law; and
that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion;
so help me God.*